

## THE UNIVERSITY AND THE COMMUNITY

The give and take relationship between the University and the community is very complex, and I would like to draw attention to some of the factors that appeal to me as being the most important. These factors are both material and intellectual.

Of the material factors, the fundamental one is cost. No modern University can run without great cost, and it is the community which pays the cost. Either Government, Federal and State, acting for the whole community, pays the whole cost, or a part of the cost falls upon the parents of those who wish to be its students, or upon the students themselves, or perhaps, also, a small part is born by altruistic benefactors. Now, at our University, all the capital that we spend on buildings is from Government acting on behalf of the community. Capital expenditure <sup>including that for Teaching Hospitals</sup> for the Triennium 1970-72 ran at the rate of <sup>approx.</sup> \$ 3 million per year. It was spent on buildings, and the result is apparent to all of you. We have a splendid group of buildings, and nearly all of it came from the community through the Government. The students themselves through their Union and Sports Unions and their management have raised important amounts of finance to help build their own Union and Sports Union buildings and the Schonell Theatre and this enterprise is a source of great pride to all of us, and is one of the reasons why the student body is held in great respect by the professors and lecturers. The Community and the University has reason to be grateful to successive Governments, not only because they have provided the buildings for us, but also because they have provided so many aesthetically pleasing buildings. Our recurrent expenditure, that pays all salaries, buys equipment and maintains the buildings and grounds in a proper state of repair, is derived in the proportion of 1 Federal to 1.85 State money, and of the 1.85 state money, <sup>36%</sup> ~~23%~~ has to be contributed from student fees. Recurrent expenditure for 1970-72 <sup>including Teach. Hosp.</sup> ran at the rate of \$19 million per year. The average number of students for 1970-72 is 17,140, so you can see that for these three years the community provided \$ 1,118 for each student.

How does the Community see that all this money provided by it through Government and as individuals is properly spent? The governing body of

the University is its Senate, on which those elected by the Graduate Body, by the Professorial Board, the Staff Associations and the students outnumber those nominated by the Governor-in-Council. These nominees however, exercise a free, individual vote in Senate. They are representatives of the Community rather than representatives of the Government. In this respect they are rather like the 12 good men and true of the jury. It is the University itself which, within the limits of the finances available, proposes new buildings or new staff positions. Proposals for capital expenditure on buildings and for recurrent expenditure are examined by the Australian Universities Commission, which after consulting the State Government makes recommendations to the Federal Government on the amounts to be made available to the University for each triennium. The A.U.C. applies Commonwealth wide standards, and soon notes whether an estimate for a particular building is extravagant, and advises accordingly.

Governments, then, can assess whether the University is doing its job. But the community as individuals naturally make their assessment more from their own personal knowledge. They know what the University does for their children or for the boy or girl next door, and by their observation of the actions of members of the University, both staff and students, within the wider community; thus when a Professor is asked to sit on a Commission, his contribution becomes public knowledge. Press, Radio and Television find University attitudes and incidents newsworthy, and so play a part, some would say a disproportionate part, in the moulding of the composite community attitude towards its University. Of recent years there has been a tendency for the Universities to provide more news of their doings and aspirations to the media. A study of the effects of this attitude would make a very interesting reading. I don't believe such a study has<sup>yet</sup> been made in Australia.

So much for the main material factors in the relationship between the University and the Community. Clearly universities are greatly indebted to the Community.

Now I would like to discuss some of the intellectual factors, and in so doing I would like to show in some degree how the University discharges its debt to the community.

Intellectual exchange between the University and the Community is a two-way affair, but I wish to concentrate mainly on the University's contribution.

In my view, the job of the University, and this is a personal view that may not be shared by my colleagues, the job of the University is the training of the intellects of the young adults so that each generation in turn can take its place in the community, using the knowledge and professional skills and the balanced judgement they acquire from their intellectual studies, in the wise use of the resources of the country, to give a better life for all.

The community expects the University to produce professionals with the highest possible skills, and this we indeed do. We graduate doctors, dentists, veterinarians, therapists, engineers, lawyers, architects, geologists, chemists, pharmacists, physicists, psychologists, biologists and agriculturalists as well as teachers, economists, linguists and people with knowledge and judgement gained from such studies as history, commerce and philosophy, government and political sciences. These art type studies are excellent training for diplomats and other members of the civil service as well as for business men. One of our youngest faculties of music; we have not as yet a department of fine arts, but we do give some lectures in these.

We take this duty of the production of graduates very seriously indeed, and each faculty is at great pains to set proper standards of knowledge and achievement for the degrees it gives.

This particular contribution to the culture of the state, using the word culture with its widest possible meaning, is the one that the community expects from us. As individuals they require us to give their sons and daughters the training and scholarship to take responsible jobs in the community, and in large part they measure our success by the results we get. A degree is regarded as a passport to a well paid responsible job, and indeed in most cases, it is just that. Once our graduates leave us to enter the community outside, they lose their identity as members of the University, and become simply individual members of the community.

Another contribution the community now expects from us is research and the fruits of research. We are expected to pioneer new

regions of knowledge, and to apply the results of research to every day life. Nearly all University teachers are deeply interested in this aspect of University work, and by observing them at it and reading the published results of it, students become aware of the search for the ultimate truth, and the integrity of mind that this requires.

Next in importance, the intellectual contributions of the University to the community, is the service that academics perform as members of commissions requiring specialist knowledge and balanced judgement as consultants to governments or industry, or as commentators in the media. This last group of contributions is made mostly in the academics own time.

Finally, the University, because it is a place where ideas are discussed and assessed, is a forum for debate on all sorts of topics of general interest to the community. Some of these topics are old, and have already been discussed by many generations on many countries but have obtained new interest because

D. Hill

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1970-72

64% is State % of combined  
State grant + student fees

36% is fee % of combined  
State grant + student fees

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OTHER FIGURES OF INTEREST

break down of combined income  
from C'wealth, State + student fees

fees	23.31%
C'wealth	35.09%
State	41.60%
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	100.00%